

AIR POUCH APR 15 1955 UNCLASSIFIED

FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM AMEMBASSY, HELSINKI

TO THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON, D.C.

REF Embassy despatch No. 405 of March 2, 1955

For Dept.	ACTION	DEPT	DECLASSIFIED
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	4/18	CIA-7 Army-3 Navy-3 Air-3 USIA-10 OSA-4	

SUBJECT: Foreign Minister Replies to SKDL Inquiry on Supreme Soviet Appeal.

The February 9 appeal of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. to the various parliaments of the world was transmitted by the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Relations to the Speaker of the Diet, and by decision of a majority of the Speakers' Board of the Diet the text was simply furnished to the Diet members individually in mimeographed form. It was thus not made the subject of an official proposal upon which the Diet would be expected to take action.

The SKDL Diet group took this as an evasion of action, and early in March SKDL Diet members introduced an inquiry as to what the Government intended to do in order to give the Diet an opportunity to support and carry out in practice the principles expressed in this appeal.

On April 13 Foreign Minister Virolainen delivered to the Diet the Cabinet's reply. After saying that the Government had been asked by the U.S.S.R. to do no more than transmit the text of the appeal to the Diet, he remarked that "the Cabinet believes Diet members will of their own accord give the appeal the serious attention which is called for by our trusting relationships with the Soviet Union and the central position of that country in world politics. Moreover, everyone is well aware that the Finnish people and its Diet are ready to support sincerely, and to the best of their capacity to carry into effect, all endeavors to promote peace and friendship among peoples."

The Cabinet thus declined to instigate formal Diet action toward the end of its declaring, as an institution and by vote, a position with reference to the appeal.

There is attached as of possible interest a translation of an editorial on this subject which appeared in Communist "Tyokansan Sanomat" for April 15, 1955. The paper reads into the Foreign Minister's statement a "binding promise" that the Finnish people and the Diet will support all endeavors to promote peace and friendship among peoples, and that the Cabinet and the Diet

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and the Diet will take part in "the activity which thousands upon thousands of citizens are displaying at this moment in participating in the collection of signatures to the appeal of the World Peace Council against the threat of atomic war." The second of these constructions is absurd, the first merely debatable.

It is amusing also to note the paper's triumphant crowing over the fact that because the official reply of the Foreign Minister had as a matter of form to quote the entire SKDL Diet inquiry to which it referred, and because in turn the inquiry had quoted the text of the appeal of the Supreme Soviet, that text has finally by this devious route come to be included in the formal minutes of the Diet.

For the Ambassador:

H. Bartlett Wells

H. Bartlett Wells
First Secretary of Embassy

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Enclosure:

Translation of editorial.

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Translation

("Työkansan Sanomat", April 15th, 1955)

A Binding Promise

The minutes for last Wednesday's session of the Diet will set forth the declaration which the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. approved on February 9th of this year and which three days later was sent via the Soviet Foreign Ministry to the Embassy of Finland in Moscow for delivery to our Diet. The delay of nearly two months in the official transmission of the declaration to its destination was occasioned first and foremost by the fact that the Cabinet and Speaker Fagerholm committed an error in choosing an inappropriate method of procedure. To begin with the declaration was not transmitted officially to the Diet at all, but was merely distributed in unofficial mimeographed copies to the individual Diet members.

In order to correct this inadequacy of procedure the SKDL representative considered it necessary to take a hand in the conduct of the matter. When the majority of the Board of Speakers of the Diet had upon the initiative of Speaker Fagerholm adopted the view that the Diet did not in this instance have the right of initiative granted by Article 32 of the Diet Act, the SKDL representatives on March 8th presented the following inquiry for answer by the appropriate member of the Cabinet, the text of the declaration of the Supreme Soviet being contained in its entirety in the introductory paragraphs:

"What does the Government intend to do in order to give the Diet an opportunity to support and to carry out in practice the aspirations toward the promotion of peace and friendship among peoples, set forth in the declaration approved on February 9th, 1955 by the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., as would be consonant with the interests of our country?"

At the session of last Wednesday this inquiry was distributed to Diet members through its being attached to the answer of the Cabinet, dated April 6th (the anniversary of the Treaty of Friendship), the essential point of which reads as follows:

"The Cabinet believes Diet members will of their own accord give to the appeal the serious attention which is called for by our trusting relations with the Soviet Union and the central position of that country in world politics. Moreover, everyone is well aware that the Finnish people and its Diet are ready to support sincerely, and to the best of their ability to carry into effect, all endeavors to promote peace and friendship among peoples."

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peoples."

Although it was not deemed necessary in this answer to say what steps the Cabinet itself plans to undertake in order to promote the peaceful aspirations set forth in the declaration of the Supreme Soviet, it does embody a valuable and binding promise to the effect that both the Finnish people and the Diet are ready to support sincerely and to carry into effect all endeavors to promote peace and friendship among peoples. In making this binding promise on behalf of the Diet the Cabinet has naturally had in mind the Diet groups of the two Government parties - the Agrarians and the Social Democrats - but it goes without saying that in all measures intended to consolidate peace the SKDL Diet group will unhesitatingly place itself at their side. Thus it seems to be guaranteed that the three largest groups in our Diet - a large majority of the Diet - are ready to lend their support to the adoption of a peace course in the fashion set forth in the declaration of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. At the same time it is naturally true that an overwhelming majority of our whole people are back of a peace course and measures intended to consolidate peace, as we are assured in the Cabinet's answer.

The Cabinet and Diet of our country and our whole people have unquestionably many opportunities of taking a practical part in measures intended to consolidate peace. The Cabinet has the opportunity to conduct the foreign policy of our country in such a way that it would be calculated to fortify peace in all Europe. It has also the opportunity of introducing in the Diet proposals tending in this direction, and also quite naturally that of refraining from presenting proposals which have the opposite intent. The Cabinet and the Diet can in mutual harmony see to it that our country can participate in the endeavors to restrain the rearmament of Germany and to avoid the fresh attack which threatens from the direction of Germany, and also that a stop be put to every variety of incitement to war in the press and in the national radio. And as the declaration of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. particularly emphasizes the need for exchanges of parliamentary delegates, one may read in the answer of our Cabinet to the SKDL inquiry a recommendation to the Speaker of the Diet that he assume a stand favorable to such exchange of parliamentary delegates.

It is stated with just reason in the Cabinet answer that the Finnish people support peace and oppose war. This fact is to be perceived, for example, in the activity which thousands upon thousands of ordinary citizens are displaying at this moment in participating in the collection of signatures to the appeal of the World Peace Council against the threat of atomic war. The

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Cabinet and the Diet as well have of course the opportunity of taking part in this activity, which is of first-rank importance to the fundamental interests of our country. In this sense, too, the answer handed in by the Cabinet incorporates a binding promise.

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